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THE TRAGEDY OF THE NATION.

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no claims.

W. P. 100

The story of the most tragical event in our national history - the assassination of President Lincoln.

All here probably have a general knowledge of the crime, but the lapse of time - thirty years -, together with the attempts of political and religious parties to falsify history, has so obscured the actual occurrences, that few could dispassionately or accurately describe either the development of the plot, the personality of the conspirators, the spirit of the times, the injuries of the victims, the character of the trial or the fate of the criminals.

My object is not to arouse vindictive memories but to put upon record certain incontrovertible facts upon which the ultimate history of the event must rest.

The death of Lincoln cast such clouds of gloom and horror over the nation that minor incidents were overshadowed and have been generally forgotten. The facts to which I shall refer are taken from concurrent testimony given at the trial, from records in the Department of Justice, from contemporaneous history and from personal observation while in attendance upon the conspirators, who were in my professional charge, during their imprisonment, at the time of their trial and thereafter.

To understand the relative importance of the various incidents, it is necessary to present briefly the condition of affairs at Washington and Canada, and the sentiment throughout the Northern States, and that which dominated the armies in the field.

At the beginning of the war, both Washington and Baltimore were essentially Southern cities. Their customs, prejudices, manner of living, were founded upon the traditions of the old families, whose plantations and estates stretched through the neighboring states of Virginia and Maryland. By marriage, through many generations, families were widely connected, and this relationship was more highly prized, in the conditions of the almost feudal civilization which then existed in the South, where the great planters had unlimited authority over

the fortunes and the lives of their slaves, and who were necessarily dependent upon each other for the maintenance of this authority, than was the case in the different conditions of the democratic North. Hence the old families of Washington were generally secessionists and so remained during the war, and, whenever opportunity offered, were active in conveying news and supplies to their friends and relatives beyond the army lines. So well organized was this service and so intrenched were its members in the Departments, that, during, the Peninsular campaign, orders sent to the army were known to General Lee at Richmond before they reached General McClellan at Malvern Hill, and so openly conducted was the underground Southern Mail Service, that at the very close of the war, the postmaster of a Maryland town used a government box for the reception of letters, so divided that the United States mail was put in one end and the Confederate mail in the other.

The influx of Northerners incident to the Union Army; the vast business connected with the Quartermaster, Commissary, Ordnance and Medical Bureaus, and with the Navy Yard; and the great increase in the clerical force of the Army, Navy, and Treasury Departments rapidly added to the population of the Capital but did not change the feelings of the natives. Nowhere else were different political opinions so sharply contrasted, but the Southern sympathizer for many reasons rarely expressed his real sentiment save among trusted associates. This sentiment, nurtured by what it fed on, grew more intense as the war went on:— every rebel victory was the signal for secret rejoicing, and, as far as it was personally safe, for public denunciation of the Union civil and military leaders:— every Union success became the cause of sorrow and increased hatred.

In the spring of 1865 some of these people grew desperate; protected by the privileges of a rich and well-governed city they personally knew nothing of the sufferings and dangers of living in a country overrun by hostile armies; imbued with the bigotry of a semi-aristocratic ignorance, they believed that

the leaders of the administration embodied the power of the government, and that with their removal the war would close and the secession of the South be secured; - they did not seem capable of reasonably understanding the resources of the North, and apparently had no correct appreciation of the spirit of determination and patriotism which animated its people.

They were not entirely responsible for these opinions, for they had been constantly misinformed by rebel sympathizers in the loyal states.

The North was honey-combed, both in the cities and throughout the country, by traitorous Semi-military Secret Societies, - The Knights of the Golden Square, the Golden Circle, and others - composed of those who desired the success of the Confederacy. Their object was to prevent, in every way, the prosecution of the war, not alone by creating a public opinion hostile to its continuance, but also by crippling the resources of the government, by sending supplies into the South, by aiding the secret mail-service of the Confederates, and by attempts to liberate captured rebels confined in the Northern military prison-camps. Their membership was estimated between one and two hundred thousand. By passwords and signs, the Confederate agents or messages could be forwarded from Richmond to any part of the North or Canada. To organize and assist these societies, the Confederate President had sent to Canada, which largely sympathized with the South, some of his most able and unscrupulous men, - Jacob Thompson of Mississippi, who had been Secretary of the Interior under Buchanan; C.C. Clay, a former Senator from Alabama; Beverly Tucker, a judge in Virginia; George N. Saunders, and others of lesser note - and these were styled "Davis' Canada Cabinet".

As in England war-vessels were fitted out to prey upon our foreign commerce, so in Canada were organized expeditions to plunder the towns and villages along our northern frontier.

Harris They were instructed to pass through New England and escape by
p.120. the way of Halifax, burning towns and farm-houses and by robbing
and plundering to secure money, horses and other available

property. Under these instructions what was known as the St. Albans' Foray was started. Some escaped rebel prisoners under a man named Young, who had been commissioned for this purpose by the Canada Cabal, started through Vermont, burnt the town of St. Albans, and robbed the banks of about two hundred thousand dollars, but met with such a determined opposition that many of them were captured and the remainder escaped by returning to Canada. During the trial for the extradition of those who escaped, they received their freedom through the influence of the Confederate authorities with the Canadian government. Saunders boasted that they - the Confederate agents staying in Canada - had their plans perfectly organized, and were ready to sack and burn Buffalo, Detroit, New York and other northern cities, and that no preparations of the United States government could prevent them. Nor were these idle boasts. Robert C. Kennedy attempted to burn New York, was arrested and hung in March, 1865. This is a part of his (Kennedy's) confession, corroborated by independent testimony. "There were eight men of our party.....It was designed to set fire to the city on the night of the Presidential election, but the phosphorus was not ready and it was put off until the 25th. of November.....I set fire to four places, - in Barnum's Museum, Lovejoy's Hotel, Tammany Hotel and the New England House..... Had they all done as I did, we would have had thirty-two fires and played a huge joke on the fire department."

Harris
p.133.

Capt. John V. Beall, another Confederate officer, in citizen's dress seized a Lake Erie steamer, "Philo Parsons," Sept. 19, 1864; - captured and sank another vessel, the "Island Queen;" and later tried to wreck a railroad train; was arrested at Suspension Bridge, tried by court martial, convicted of committing acts of war while wearing no visible badge of military service. Davis assumed officially the responsibility for Beall's actions, but the sentence of the court was confirmed and he was hanged February 24, 1865.

Many other acts even more atrocious, threatening the lives of

innumerable men, women and children, were considered and some attempted by these men in Canada, - the destruction of the Croton dam, the poisoning of the reservoirs of the large cities, and the wholesale introduction of small-pox and yellow fever into New York, Philadelphia, Washington, Norfolk and New Berne.

Upon the steamer "Alpha" which arrived at Halifax, July 12, 1864, was Dr. Blackburn, with eight trunks smuggled from Bermuda, five of them and a valise with Spanish marks, filled with clothing which was said to have been infected in Cuba with yellow fever. These five trunks, and one valise, filled with the poisoned wearing apparel were smuggled into Boston and expressed to Philadelphia, and the agent, a native of England and resident of Toronto, Canada, (Godfrey Joseph Hyams) swore -and the express receipts of the goods were in evidence- that he was instructed to sell them at public auction at any price "on a hot day or of a night" "as far south as he could possibly go," "where the Federal government held possession and had the most troops", but that the valise was to be expressed to President Lincoln. Hyams was afraid to express the valise, but repacked the goods in nine new trunks, leaving five of them with W.L. Wall & Co., Commission Merchants, and four to a man by the name of Myers, a sutler at New Berne, N.C. No special sickness followed save at New Berne, where an epidemic of yellow fever caused the death of many hundreds of citizens and soldiers.

Now while it is quite right that the infamy of such deeds should consign the names of the perpetrators to universal detestation, these crimes have been referred to in order that we can understand what manner of men these Canadian Confederates were and the state of mind they were in about the first of April, 1865. Their brutal, cowardly, and fiendish plans for robbery, incendiarism, devastation, and wholesale murder of non-belligerents had been successfully opposed and brought to naught. Kennedy and Beall had been captured and executed; the victorious lines of Grant were closing around Richmond; the downfall of the Confederacy was assured unless some master-

stroke should paralyze the power of the government.

To these men, who, under the protection of the British flag, in safety and cold blood, had planned the death of hundreds of innocent strangers, it seemed no great matter to attempt the death of Lincoln, the President; Johnson, the Vice President; Seward, the Secretary of State; and Grant, the General of the Army; and they reasoned that as there would, after the death of these civil officers, be no constitutional method of filling these official positions, the United States could have no legal authority; and the Confederacy would immediately receive foreign recognition.

To assassinate Lincoln was no new conception. It was plotted to kill him in Baltimore on his way to his first inauguration in 1861. I was one of the mounted guard that escorted him in Philadelphia to the Continental, and again saw him in the evening. He was a gaunt, awkward, countrified man of fifty-two; six feet three and a half inches in height, long in legs and arms. His face was sallow, thin, angular, homely to a marked degree, but stamped with humor, honesty and determination, and did not betray any of the anxiety which was shown by his companions, for even then it was an open secret that he would not be allowed to pass through Baltimore unmolested.

By a clever manoeuvre those watching for him in the latter city were outwitted, and loyal men breathed easier when the telegraph, the next morning, announced the safe arrival in Washington of the President-elect.

The fear of death by assassination had little effect upon Lincoln. Threatening letters were constantly received at the White House but the brave man told his friends that he could not possibly guard against these personal dangers unless he should shut himself up in an iron box, in which condition he could scarcely perform the duties of President. By the hand of a murderer he could only die once, "to go continually in fear, would be to die over and over."

Again, he said to his friend, Father Chiniquay, "I see no other

way than to be always prepared to die. I know my danger, but a man must not care how and where he dies, provided he dies at the post of honor and duty."

The assassination of Lincoln, Johnson, and Seward was publicly proposed in December, 1864, five months before its consummation. In the Selma (Alabama) Dispatch was published this offer under the caption:-

"Million Dollars for Assassination."

"One million dollars wanted to have peace by the 1st. of March. If the citizens of the Southern Confederacy will furnish me with the cash, or good securities for the sum of one million dollars, I will cause the lives of Abraham Lincoln, Wm.H.Seward, and Andrew Johnson to be taken by the first of March next.

This will give us peace, and satisfy the world that cruel tyrants cannot live in a land of liberty. If this is not accomplished, nothing will be claimed beyond the sum of fifty thousand dollars in advance, which is supposed to be necessary to reach and slaughter the three villains. I will give, myself, one thousand dollars towards this patriotic purpose. Every one wishing to contribute will address Box X, Cahawba, Alabama. December 1st. 1864."

Harris p.151. In January, 1865, Thompson told a man in Canada that he had bold, daring men who proposed to execute the plan, and he was in favor of the attempt, but had concluded to defer giving his answer until he should have consulted with his government at Richmond.

On the 6th. or 7th. of April, 1865, John H. Surratt arrived in Montreal with despatches from Richmond for Thompson.

After reading these letters, one from Mr. Benjamin, the rebel Secretary of State, and one in cipher, -thought to be from Jefferson Davis- Thompson said, - "This makes the thing all right."

Within two days, two hundred thousand dollars were withdrawn from the Ontario Bank of Montreal, and Surratt returned in haste to Washington.

This was the condition of affairs among the Canadian conspirators at this eventful time - let us see how it was at the

North. In the preceding November, Lincoln had for the second time been elected to the Presidency; in the previous March he had spoken the solemn and sublime sentences of the second inaugural;—in the early days of April the glorious news of Lee's surrender announced approaching peace.

Rejoicings over a once-more united country, the vindication of the wisdom of their chief executive, whose patience, ability, and goodness had sustained the authority of the government through the disappointments, defeats and trials of the sorrowful years of the war, made glad the hearts of all loyal people and prepared them to welcome to the sisterhood of the nation the returning Southern States. It was an era of good feeling and of magnanimous forgiveness.

In the army the same sentiments largely prevailed. Among opposing troops in the field there is little personal feeling of hatred. While in battle every opportunity is improved to damage and destroy the strength of the enemy; after the fight is over, the wounded,—be he friend or foe,—receive equal attention. This was particularly the case with the soldiers of the Army of the Potomac, and of the Army of Northern Virginia.

On many a hard-fought field they had tested their courage with varying results and each appreciated the valor of the other.

But the first week in April had witnessed the last conflict between these veteran soldiers, and by the generous terms of surrender extended to Lee by Grant, the Confederate troops, fed by the Union commissary, were returning to their homes, paroled by the government and grateful for its clemency.

The Northern soldiers, thankful that the war had been successfully ended, with no enmity for their former opponents, congratulating each other that there was to be no more exposure to the hardships and dangers of campaigns, impatiently awaited the order for their muster out, and their return to their friends and the occupations of civil life.

Public affairs betokened the reestablishment of the blessings of peace and national prosperity.

Then, as unexpectedly as a bolt of lightning from a cloudless sky, came the news of the assassination of Lincoln and the brutal assault upon Seward. Rejoicings at the North and in the armies gave way to sorrow and indignation.

Fortunate was it for the South that the wicked deeds had not occurred before the surrender.

Lincoln was esteemed by all loyal people but he was beloved by the soldiers, and each one felt that in his death he had lost a powerful, and almost personal, friend.

John Wilkes Booth, Mrs. Mary E. Surratt, her son, John H. Surratt, instigated by the Confederate Cabal in Canada, and some of the civil authorities in Richmond, - for the Southern soldiers were not implicated, - were the prime movers in the plot.

Booth was of an erratic and undisciplined disposition, inheriting some histrionic ability from the great actor, his father, the elder Booth; a good looking young man, of much personal magnetism; fond of good clothes, high living and fast company; flush with his money, fond of admiration and reckless and low in his dissipations and company; shirking all systematic work, and covetous of achieving celebrity by some notorious act.

The Canadian Confederates stimulated this morbid ambition with assurances that by accomplishing the removal of Lincoln he would secure the affection of the Southern people and the admiration of the world.

The Surratts were principally actuated by sympathy for the South and by bitter hatred of the Union cause. These three and all their assistants expected large pecuniary rewards.

During the summer and autumn of 1864 and winter of 1865, Booth and Surratt often visited Canada, consulting with Thompson and the others, and, upon returning to Washington, spent much time in the counties of Maryland bordering upon the Potomac, becoming familiar with the roads, over which Booth subsequently made his escape.

Booth selected for his assistants, David E. Herold, George A. Atzerodt, Lewis Payne, Samuel Arnold, Michael O'Laughlin, Ed-

ward Spangler, and Dr. Mudd.

Herold was an insignificant young man, hardly more than a boy, whose school-days had been spent in Charles County, Maryland, who had been at times a druggist's clerk in Washington, and who had been picked up by Booth to run his errands and attend to his horses, and was much elated by associating with the actor.

Atzerodt, called "Port Tobacco" was a dissipated hanger-on of Washington saloons and often engaged in smuggling across the Potomac, loud in his cups, savage in threats, but a craven in action. He was to have assassinated at the Kirkwood House, Vice President Johnson, and had there taken a room in which were afterwards found, hidden in the bed, the revolver and bowie-knife which Booth had given him, and hanging on the wall was the overcoat belonging to Booth and containing his Canadian bank-book.

When the conspirators separated at the theatre for the performance of their respective crimes, Atzerodt did not return to the hotel, but after wandering about the streets tried to escape through Upper Maryland and was arrested in Montgomery County, April 20th. He offered to turn State's evidence.

Payne was sent from Canada in February, remaining the first night in Washington at the house of Mrs. Surratt, and three weeks later remained there for three days. He was a brutal

type of guerrilla trooper, - of great strength and agility, deep chested and broad-shouldered, with an enormous neck and comparatively small head, ferocious but of little wit. At first he had been by lot selected to kill Lincoln, but afterwards he was assigned to murder Seward.

Arnold had been a soldier. He had been one of the early conspirators with Booth but growing weary of the often postponed performance, had about a month before gone to Fort Monroe, it was thought at the time to prepare the means of escape for Booth and his party through Southeast Virginia.

"Cuth" O'Loughlin was a Confederate deserter, a lover of hard whiskey

p. 475. and low company; his task was the assassination of General Crant. The General's unexpected departure from Washington prevented the attempt.

Spangler was the least intelligent of all the assistants - was the carpenter of the theatre - and was completely under Booth's influence, probably knew nothing of the plot but was used by Booth to arrange the fastenings of the doors of the theatre-box and aid him in his escape from the stage. He thus gave Booth much assistance.

With the exception of Mrs. Surratt, Dr. Mudd was the most intelligent of them all. He lived near Bryant-town, Md., about thirty miles from Washington, had sometime previously introduced Booth to John Surratt, had assisted Booth in the purchase of the horse upon which Payne tried to escape, was bitterly opposed to the North because most of his slaves had run away, and was suspected of giving aid and comfort to the enemy.

There was no direct evidence that he knew of the assassination until afterwards, but, whether influenced by fear for himself, or by the desire for the escape of Booth, he told so many and so contradictory lies about his connection with the affair, that he was arrested and tried.

Mrs. Surratt was with Booth the life of the enterprise, and her home on H (541) Street was the meeting place of most of the conspirators. She was a good-looking widow of about forty-five. She owned a place in Maryland, some ten miles below Washington, which she had rented to a man by the name of Lloyd. She was said to have been an affectionate mother and a pleasant acquaintance, but she was saturated with the local intensity of hatred against the government: long before she had said that she "would give one thousand dollars to any one that would kill Harris Lincoln." She personally attended to many of the arrangements to facilitate Booth's escape. Upon Tuesday - the 11th. - at Booth's request and at his expense she went to her house in Maryland, where Herold, Surratt, and Atzerodt had secreted two Spencer carbines and told Lloyd "to have those shooting-irons

p. 193.

handy as they would be called for before long." Upon the 14th., Friday, the day of the assassination, she again went to see Lloyd taking to him from Booth a field-glass and two bottles of whiskey, and told him "to have the shooting-irons, etc. ready as they would be called for that night." After her return, about nine o'clock, some one, probably Booth or John Surratt came to see her, found out that everything was ready at Lloyd's and went directly to the theatre.

About ten minutes after the murder, and before it was known in that part of the town, a window in her house was raised and a woman asked two soldiers "what was wrong down town?"

The time appointed for Lincoln's death was ten minutes past ten. The local traditions assert that in the room and on the bed where Lincoln died, that afternoon Booth had tried to take a nap, in preparation for the fatigue of the night.

The details of the plot, so long contemplated and so carefully studied, were now complete. The time and actors were known to many;- how many will never be known. It was the subject of so frequent and public conversation among the Confederates in Canada, that it is in testimony, that Clay, one of their number, said, in speaking of the rejoicing over Lee's surrender - "they would put the laugh on the other side of their mouth in a day or two," and Saunders expressed apprehension that Booth would make a failure, - saying, that "he was desperate and reckless," and he was afraid the whole thing would prove a failure.

Dr. Merritt, a native of Canada but of New York parentage, testified before the commission, "I was at Galt, . . . and Harris I ascertained there that Harper and Caldwell had stopped there p.169. and had started for the States. When I found they had left for Washington, probably for the purpose of assassinating the President, I went to Squire Davidson, a justice of the peace, to give information and have them stopped.

He said that the thing was too ridiculously or supremely absurd to take any notice of: it would only appear foolish to give such information, and cause arrests to be made on such

grounds; it was so inconsistent that no person would believe it; and he declined to issue any process. I then called upon the judge of the court of assizes, made my statement to him, and he said that I should have to go to the grand jury."

This testimony is corroborated by that of Squire Davidson.

But I will not weary you with cumulative evidence, of which there is a great quantity. In the afternoon Booth had also spent some time with Atzerodt at the Kirkwood and had prepared a card, which would have introduced the assassin to the room of the Vice President.

Each of the active conspirators had secured horses for their flight;- the others were seen between nine and ten riding on the avenues, but Booth's horse was held by a boy, in a lane back of the theatre.

It was generally known in Washington that the President with a party was that evening to attend a presentation of "Our American Cousin". Booth had given tickets to some of his friends and had advised others to be present telling them that "they would see great acting." There was a chance that the President would leave at the close of the second act. At this time, Booth, saying, "I think he will come down now," with two companions aligned themselves upon the sidewalk, intending to shoot Lincoln there, but the President remained in the building. Booth went into an adjoining saloon, took a drink of whiskey and reentered the theatre.

A well-dressed man in the crowd cries out the time and some one rides away. It is Herold on his way to conduct Payne to the house of the Secretary. Herold had been selected to pilot Payne, who was unfamiliar with Washington, through the streets of the city, and the entire party through the byways of Charles County to the Potomac. Reaching the home of the Secretary, Payne dismounts, hands the bridle to Herold, enters - ostensibly with medicine from Dr. Verdie, - for Mr. Seward, by a recent carriage accident, is confined to his bed, in an upper chamber, with a broken arm and a broken jaw.

Payne, armed with revolvers and a bowie-knife, assaults the

son of the Secretary, twice fracturing his skull, bursts into the sick-room, slashes at the venerable man on the bed, stabbing him in the neck and nearly cutting off his entire cheek, and attempts to disembowel the faithful soldier-nurse, who, although himself an invalid and maimed, bravely grapples with the infuriated assassin who is continually shouting, "I am mad! I am mad!" Escaping from the room, Payne wounds on the stairway, two other persons, leaving in this house of suffering and horror, five desperately injured men, regains the street to find that Herold has deserted him and that his horse is walking away.

To catch him is easy work for the guerrilla trooper, but without a guide he rides in vain to find the bridge, crossing into Maryland. Spurring rapidly in the darkness he is thrown from his falling horse, - remains for some time unconscious and for the next two days hides, probably in the Congressional Cemetery.

Compelled by hunger, about midnight, April 17th., he returns to the house of Mrs. Surratt.

With a laborer's pick in his hand, and a part of his shirt-sleeve for a cap, for he lost his hat when he was thrown, he knocks and is admitted to find himself covered by the pistols of the officers who had come to arrest her.

When the two were confronted she raised her right hand exclaiming, "Before God, Sir, I have not seen that man before; I have not hired him. I do not know anything about him."

This voluntary statement was most damaging, for, as before mentioned, Payne was of marked personality, had been a frequent visitor at her house within two months, had remained there for at least four days, sitting at her table and conversing with her.

These two were the first arrested.

Again some one spoke the time, "ten o'clock and five minutes," and the assault at the Kirkwood was to have been made.

Again the voice louder and clearer than before cried out, "ten o'clock and ten minutes". The crowd separated in the lobby and Booth goes up the stairs to the dress-circle.

Two boxes had by the removal of a partition been converted in-

to one for the reception of the party. There was a passageway behind the doors of the boxes, and a door closed this passage from the gallery. The doors were held by spring locks on the inside. Some one, probably the carpenter, Spangler, had withdrawn the screws of the locks, so that the doors could be pushed open; and a mortice had been cut in the wall opposite the outer door so that a brace would prevent anyone opening it from the outside; a board for this purpose was left back of the door. Booth pushed by the sentinel at the outer door saying that the President had sent for him, forced out the screws of the lock, and secured the door with the plank.

Standing in the dark passage, through a hole recently reamed out in the inner door he located the members of the party.

Lincoln was at the angle of the box away from the stage. Mrs. Lincoln was accompanied by Miss Harris, daughter of Senator Harris, and Major Rathbone, in place of General and Mrs. Grant as was originally intended. The second scene of the third act held the attention of the audience. Unnoticed Booth entered the box, a bowie-knife in his left hand, in his right a revolver, - its muzzle within three feet of his victim - hastily assured himself that his plan for immediate escape was feasible, and then fired, shouting, "Revenge for the South" - dropped the pistol, transferred the knife to his right hand, and placed his left hand on the balustrade to spring down to the stage, twelve feet below. Much practise had made this for him an easy thing.

Major Rathbone sprang to seize him, but received a cut laying open the arm from shoulder to elbow. Booth leaped to the stage, tearing the decorations at the front of the box and apparently twisting his ankle, partially fell, but immediately rose, turned to the audience, brandished the bloody knife, declaimed, "Sic semper tyrannis" and limped behind the scenes. It did not take in its whole performance the time I have used in the telling. The report of the pistol was muffled by the heavy draperies and the audience was not fully aware of the

actual events until they saw the smoke coming from the box and heard Mrs. Lincoln's cry of "Murder". People tried to force open the door but it was held fast by the brace, and it was not opened until my messmate, Mr. Mc. Clay, a Lieutenant of the Ordinance Corps, was lifted into the front of the box from the stage.

It was intended in the original plan, when the shot was fired to have all the lights extinguished, allowing the assassin to escape in the darkness, but Booth would not relinquish this opportunity for theatrical display and thereby made more difficult his escape.

The President was shot just behind the left ear, - the ball penetrating nearly the entire transverse diameter of the brain, - became immediately and permanently unconscious, was removed to a neighboring house, and about seven the next morning painlessly died.

Booth passed to the alley behind the theatre, mounted his horse, was joined at the Old Brick Church by Herold and rode rapidly to the Navy Yard bridge over the Eastern branch of the Potomac, which they approached separately. When challenged, Booth gave his own name - for no general alarm had yet been given - reasoning that when it should be reported, the police would think that some confederate had given it as a blind so that the real criminal might gain time in escaping some other way, and this was what actually occurred.

Fifteen minutes after the crime, every telegraph line leading out of Washington except a government wire to Fort Monroe, was cut, - an evidence of the wide ramification of the plot. Herold followed, passing himself off as a farmer returning from an evening in the city. Once over the bridge they galloped to Lloyd's, where Mrs. Surratt, in the afternoon, had left the field-glass and whiskey, took these and one of the carbines and continued their journey into Charles County towards the smuggler's crossing of the lower Potomac.

When Booth jumped from the box, his spur caught in a fold of the flag and so twisted him in the accustomed leap, that the fall broke the small bone of the left leg and he came near

fainting on the stage, but the nerve of the man, and the excitement, enabled him to limp off and mount his horse.

The pain grew so intense during the weary ride that he could not continue his flight, and they stopped about four o'clock ^{in the morning.} at the house of Dr. Mudd for rest and treatment of the fractured bone. Here he remained until late in the afternoon, when Mudd and Herold, who had been to the village, where they had seen the pursuing Union cavalry, returned and forced him to hide in woods. In a thick grove he lay on the cold ground for nearly one hundred and fifty hours before he was taken to a boat on the Potomac, and during this time the pain in the leg grew more severe from poor surgery and out-door exposure, causing high fever and occasional delirium, in which, it is reported, he thought he was visited, for hours at a time, by the murdered President.

The search had now become so hot that those who had been providing for him, grew alarmed for their own safety and in the darkness carried him to the river. Herold paddled across, having first shot their horses. On the Virginia side he was carried in an old wagon to the Rappahannock, where they were met by three of Moseby's officers, one of whom loaned Booth his horse and they together rode to a farm-house near Bowling Green; the officers here left them and Booth and Herold sought shelter in the barn. Before morning it was surrounded by the Union cavalry; in the darkness they were summoned to surrender. Herold gave himself up but Booth refused, saying however, that if they would give him a distance of a hundred yards he would come out and fight the whole party. They answered they had come to capture and not to fight him. The barn, a sort of tobacco drying shed, the sides of loosely jointed boards, stocked with some little hay, was set on fire, and by this light, contrary to orders, Sergeant Boston Corbett fired and Booth fell, the bullet penetrating the back of the neck at the junction of the spine with the head, causing entire paralysis of all the voluntary muscles of the body. He was shot in nearly the same spot wher

Lincoln had been wounded, but in the case of the President, the ball penetrating the brain caused unconsciousness and so prevented pain, whereas with Booth there was constant and excessive pain, and inability to talk or swallow, although he was perfectly conscious and anxious to send messages. He died about noon, upon the 26th. of April, realizing that his crime brought to him only infamy, and aroused only sentiments of indignation and horror at the North and South alike. His last message was to his mother telling her that he "died for his country".

Among his personal effects was a bill of exchange, in his favor, drawn by the Montreal Branch of the Ontario Bank. His body was wrapped and sewed up in a horse-blanket, taken to the Potomac, and by boat taken to the Navy Yard at Washington and there identified by many persons, among others by Dr. May, a distinguished surgeon, who had a short time before removed a tumor from Booth's neck. The body was taken in a row-boat to the Washington Arsenal and in the dead of night, in the presence of the military storekeeper, four enlisted men and myself - the only commissioned officer - was hidden in a place so secret that never to this day has it been correctly described.

We were requested by Secretary Stanton to keep silent and no man during these thirty years has yet told. I believe the body was finally given to the family, under agreement to never mark by mound or monument where it should be placed.

The assassination everywhere created the greatest consternation. The authorities immediately realized that the criminals were simply the degraded tools of some powerful organization and suspected that the crime might be the signal for the union of the traitorous secret military societies of the North and the rebellious soldiers of the South and for the inauguration of a civil war that would have no defined boundaries.

Suspicion and distrust were universal; who could be depended upon?

Grant soon returning, immediately restored confidence.

"Trust those" he said, "who have shown themselves trustworthy

in the field." The District of Columbia, by President Lincoln's order of September 25, 1862, was under martial law, and was now placed by Stanton under command of General Hancock, whose skill and bravery had been shown in many a battle and who was one of the heroes of Gettysburg; General Hartraft - afterwards Governor of Pennsylvania - was made by the President's order, Special Provost Martial General; the old Penitentiary on the Arsenal grounds at the foot of Four and a half Street was selected as the place of imprisonment; the military guard consisted of four regiments of the Veteran Reserve composed of soldiers who had been relieved, on account of wounds and injuries, from active service in the field.

The city for a short time was almost as if in a state of siege; strong guards commanded the approaches; no person came or went without careful inspection; telegraphic communication was re-established. Many were suspected and arrested, some of whom were never brought to trial.

With the exception of Booth and Herold, the active conspirators in Washington were speedily captured. Payne was at first confined on a gunboat, and as he had there attempted to commit suicide by knocking his head against a beam, upon removal to the Penitentiary, he and the other prisoners, were forced to wear a hood, thickly padded and open only for the eyes, mouth and nose; - they were all manacled and placed in separate cells secured by doors of heavy iron crossbars. At each door was constantly stationed a sentinel, and a company of soldiers was always on guard in the building.

In a little while, the hoods, acting as sweating bath to the head, caused symptoms of mental trouble in some of the prisoners already debilitated by the nervous tension of past excitement and present fears. I notified Secretary Stanton that unless the hoods were removed and exercise permitted in the open air, he would have a lot of lunatics on his hands and requested medical council. You can realize that a young man, as I then was, I was unwilling alone to become responsible for

the health of twenty or thirty people, on trial, in very unusual circumstances, for their lives, and to whom was directed the attention of the civilized world.

Dr. Gray - the head of the Utica Asylum, an alienist of the highest authority - came in response to the invitation of the Secretary and endorsed my recommendations;- the hoods were permanently removed and two or three hours of exercise in the enclosed yard allowed. At my request they were also permitted to have reading matter, Secretary Stanton stipulating that there should be no books or papers furnished that had been printed within thirty years. The selection was at my discretion;- I loaned them mainly the stories of Cooper and Dickens.

I have been recently assured by a gentleman of New York, who was one of the suspected prisoners and is now a prominent lawyer and has been a member of the national committee, that, in his belief, what I then did for him, preserved his reason.

I was ordered to make three daily inspections of each of the prisoners, and twice a day to make a written report of their condition to the Secretary of War direct.

My personal relations with the prisoners were cordial and pleasant. Why should they not have been? Whatever of comfort or of privilege they received were largely procured by my recommendation. At first Mrs. Surratt refused to take food, evidently intending to provoke an attack of sickness, and would yield to no threat of her attendants but when I assured her in a kindly way, that for her health I was professionally responsible, and, that, much as I should regret the necessity to resort to such methods, I should employ all the means, which I ~~explain~~ to her, for supplying her with required nourishment, she quietly yielded and thanked me for my considerate treatment.

They all behaved well and gave no trouble. They were none of them hardened by previous criminal associations.

Upon May 10th. was convened the Court Martial for their trial;- Major General Hunter, presiding. General Joseph Holt, Judge Advocate General, U.S.A., was the Judge Advocate and Recorder.

Herold, Atzerodt, Payne, O'Loughlin, Arnold, Mrs. Surratt and

Dr. Mudd were the accused.

I will not detain you with the history of the trial. The Court has been violently, and in my opinion unjustly, accused of undue severity, but of its moderation proof is given by the fact that none of the many persons who were shown to have aided Booth in his escape, both in Maryland and Virginia, after knowing of the proclamation for his arrest, and who were not previously connected with the conspiracy, were put upon trial but set at liberty, and only those who were connected with execution of the plot were punished.

The Court was convened May 9th. and sent their verdict to the President, June 30th. Their findings were approved and the execution took place July 7th.

Herold, Atzerodt, Payne and Mrs. Surratt were condemned to death, and upon the 7th. of July, 1865, were hung upon a double gallows simultaneously. Herold and Atzerodt going to their death like frightened boys, Payne with the coolness of a soldier, Mrs. Surratt, although suffering from nervous exhaustion, with the resignation characteristic of women who wait inevitable death. For her there has naturally been much sympathy, but it should be extended to her memory not for her death, but for the influences which moulded her feelings. She was the only one who properly estimated the enormity of the crime and intelligently and deliberately ventured her own life to destroy that of those whom she had been taught to believe had brought about the calamities of the Confederacy. She was no doubt somewhat influenced by the hope, that, if her guilty actions should be fully recognized, on account of her sex, she might escape capital punishment.

During the war women caught in the performance of acts, which would have condemned men to instant death, had been liberated with the injunction to be good women and not to do such acts again. The female spies during the war, were the most effective members of the Confederate Secret Service and the natural results of this mawkish, unmilitary, and unjust sentimentality

caused the death of many hundreds of Union soldiers.

It is poor equity to counterbalance an unmerciful condemnation of woman's frailties by a frivolous gallantry in the punishment of woman's crime.

Mrs. Surratt possessed unalterable determination and an over-mastering devotion to the Southern cause and from my careful observation of her during her imprisonment, would, I believe, have willingly sacrificed her own life to overthrow the Republic; an heroic but misguided woman.

At midnight, July 16, Dr. Mudd, Arnold, O'Loughlin and Spangler - rejoicing that they had escaped the gallows - were marched under military guard to the government wharf at the Arsenal and by a Potomac boat sent to Fort Monroe, were transferred the next night to the gunboat "Florida", Capt. William Budd, commanding, and immediately carried to sea with sealed orders which were not to be opened until six hours from port. In the morning we found the bow pointing south and after coaling at Port Royal and touching at Key West finally delivered to the commander at the Dry Tortugas, a military prison, Fort Jefferson, whose wall enclosed the island and was surrounded by a moat, which had a curious but effective patrol. The moat was about fifty feet wide, perhaps ten feet deep, filled with sea-water and stacked with big, man-eating sharks - twelve to fifteen feet in length - for whom all had the greatest respect. I think that the prisoners were ultimately pardoned. It is now realized, that the assassination, apart from its criminality, was a political blunder. At any previous time it would not have materially changed the conduct of the war, except to have made it more bitter and to have inflamed the soldiers with the passion of revenge; - from the time of its occurrence it became responsible for many of the difficulties of reconstruction.

Commiseration, not unmixed with contempt, is the sentiment entertained for the insignificant instruments who committed the cruel acts, but it must be remembered that their weak in-

telligence was dominated by powerful minds, who seduced them with specious pleas of loyalty to the South, and tempted them by the promise of enormous rewards.

The burden of the guilt of this political blunder and of this most dastardly murder rests upon those who instigated the crime, and they should never be forgotten nor forgiven.

The name of the immediate actor in the useless assassination arouses horror for the deed and the man, not unmixed with pity for his great suffering and final remorse. His inordinate ambition, personal vanity and low morality, fitted him to become the willing tool for any villainy when under the influence of unscrupulous men. Recently I visited the locality where we placed his body thirty years ago, marked by no memorial; unknown alike by the stranger and by those dwelling in the place; preserved by no record; "unwept, unhonored, and unsung" it is rapidly passing into oblivion.

How different with Lincoln, the martyr! To his memory States and Nations vie with each other in tributes of honor; to commemorate the goodness and greatness of his character monuments of marble and granite have been erected; institutions of learning, benevolence and business, streets, towns, counties, perpetuate his name. The nation that he dearly loved and served so well, annually celebrates his birth.

For him there is no better epitaph than his own words; "I see no other way than to be always prepared to die. I know my danger but man must not care how and where he dies, provided he dies at the post of honor and duty."

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